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EFFECT OF SHELF AGING ON O-RING MATERIALS

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16. ABSTRACT Commercial O-rings made from 13 different rubber compounds were tested for physical properties when they were received from the manufacturer and after 7 and 12 years of shelf aging. No gross changes were observed in tensile strength, elongation, or compression deflection characteristics.					
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EFFECT OF SHELF AGING ON O-RING MATERIALS

SUMMARY

The physical properties of 13 commercial O-ring compounds after 7 and 12 years of shelf aging were compared with the original properties. No gross property changes were detected. All O-rings tested are considered suitable for use after 12 years of shelf aging.

INTRODUCTION

The complexity, cost, and the possible disastrous consequence of the failure of any single component of a space vehicle have resulted in extreme reliability requirements for all components used in these vehicles. Because elastomeric materials are considered to be relatively perishable, much time and effort have been expended in developing specific, conclusive information on the effect of age on these materials. Described here are the results to date of one such effort.

EXPERIMENTAL

In 1962, 300 O-rings made from each of 13 different compounds in size 2-220 were purchased from Parker Seal Company for use in compatibility studies. All O-rings were individually packaged in sealed envelopes. All O-rings of a given compound were made from the same batch of mixed stock. All O-rings were cured in the fourth quarter of 1962. In the first quarter of 1963, 10 O-rings of each compound were randomly selected for test. The cross section of each O-ring was measured in 10 places around the circumference of the O-ring with the average of the 100 measurements made on O-rings from each compound being used as a standard dimension for all O-rings of that batch.

Tensile strength and elongation were measured on these O-rings for use as baseline data in future studies. The remaining O-rings were stored in their original packages in an internal store room. The temperature varied over the range of 15° to 32°C (60° to 90°F), depending upon the season.

In the third quarter of 1969 and 1974, 7 and 12 years after the original physical property measurements were made, 20 O-rings for each test period were randomly selected from each compound. Ten of these were used for tensile strength and elongation measurements. The remaining 10 were used for hardness and compression deflection measurements. These last two parameters were not measured in the original tests but were measured in 1969 and 1974. The tensile, elongation, and hardness data are shown in the Table. The compression deflection data are shown in Figures 1 through 13.

CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the results of this study and upon a visual examination of the O-rings tested, it is concluded that all the O-ring compounds tested are suitable for use after 12 years of shelf aging under the conditions described. Even though there are some changes in elongation with age, this property is of no real significance in O-rings, and applicable O-ring material specifications do not include elongation as a requirement. The differences in compression deflection characteristics are no greater than those normally found between different lots of O-rings made from the same compound.

TABLE. PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF THIRTEEN O-RING COMPOUNDS

Compound Identity	Elastomer Type	Shore A Hardness				Tensile Strength						Elongation			
		Nominal	1969		1974	1963 (psi)	1969 (psi)	1974 (psi)	1963 (kg/cm ²)	1969 (kg/cm ²)	1974 (kg/cm ²)	Percent Change		1969 (%)	1974 (%)
												1969	1974		
PSI-30-5	NBR	70 ± 5	80	80	80	1505	1385	1633	106	112	116	+ 5.3	+ 9.8	193	175
N204-7	NBR	70 ± 5	80	80	80	1649	1723	1772	116	121	125	+ 4.6	+ 7.5	168	160
1011-10	NBR	60 ± 5	70	70	70	1487	1367	1631	105	110	115	+ 5.4	+ 9.8	289	285
47-071	NBR	70 ± 5	75	75	75	1460	1442	1471	103	102	104	- 1.2	+ 0.75	218	242
109-7	NBR	70 ± 5	75	75	75	2610	2796	2588	184	197	182	+ 7.1	- 0.84	317	261
B278-7	IIR	70 ± 5	80	80	80	1397	1463	1492	98	103	105	+ 4.7	+ 6.8	189	181
B314-7	IIR	70 ± 5	75	75	75	1503	1536	1601	106	108	113	+ 2.1	+ 6.5	234	225
C147-7	CR	70 ± 5	70	70	70	2193	2183	2144	155	154	151	- 0.5	- 2.2	245	229
S417-7	SI	70 ± 5	60	60	60	970	969	916	68	61	65	-10.4	- 5.5	210	233
S151-7	SI	70 ± 5	75	75	75	1152	1091	1052	81	77	74	- 5.3	- 8.6	71	68
77-545	FPM	70 ± 5	75	75	75	1892	1694	1735	133	119	122	-10.4	- 8.2	165	172
V495-7	FPM	70 ± 5	75	75	75	1958	1783	1910	133	126	135	- 5.6	+ 1.1	175	180
V274-9	FPM	90 ± 5	90	85	85	1622	1680	1904	114	119	134	+ 3.5	+17.3	103	113

Notes: NBR — Nitrile-Butadiene Rubber
IIR — Isobutylene-Isoprene Rubber (Butyl)
CR — Chloroprene Rubber (Neoprene)
SI — Silicone Rubber
FPM — Fluorocarbon Rubber (Viton or Fluorel)

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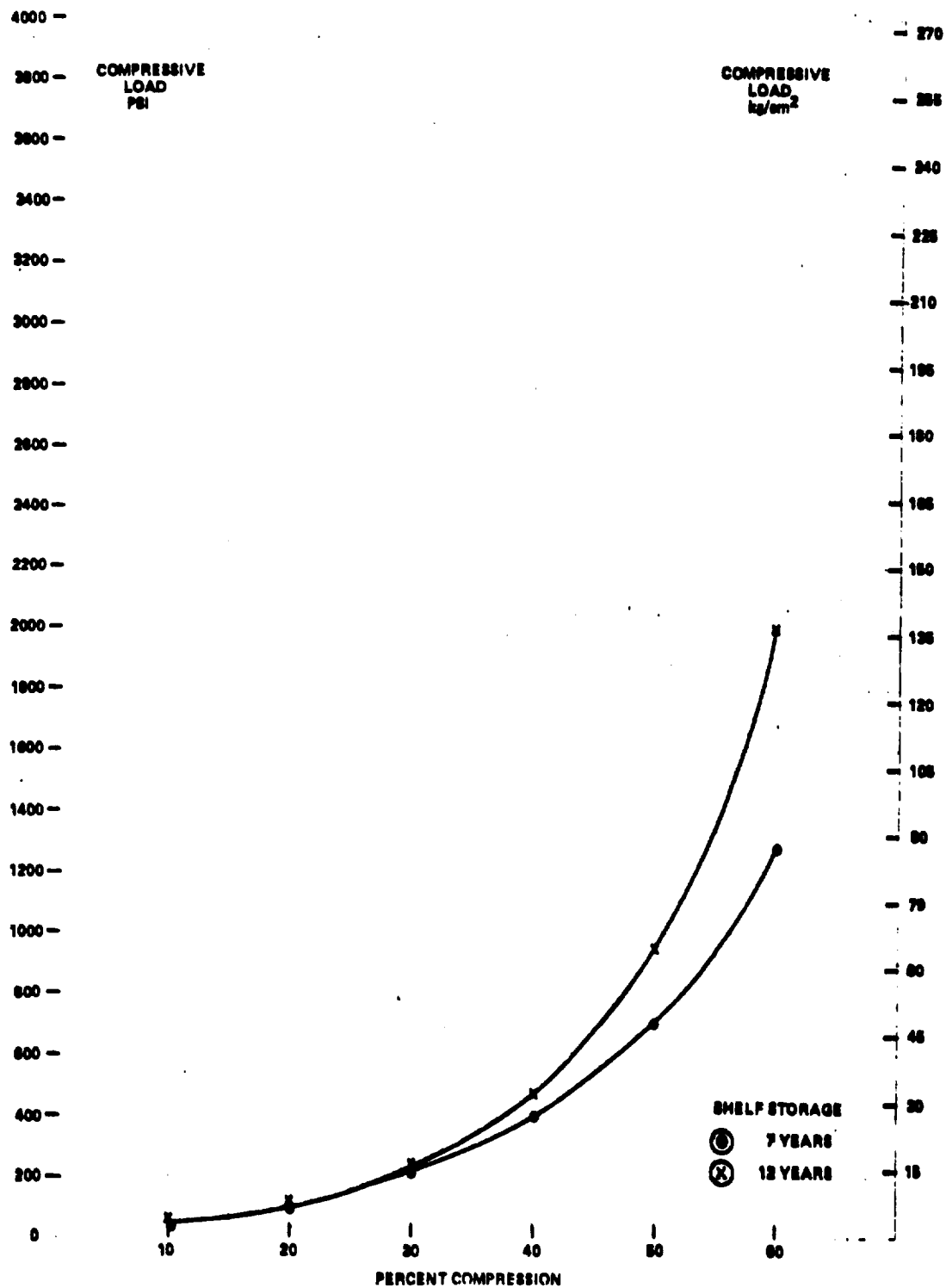


Figure 1. Buna-N PS-1-30-5.

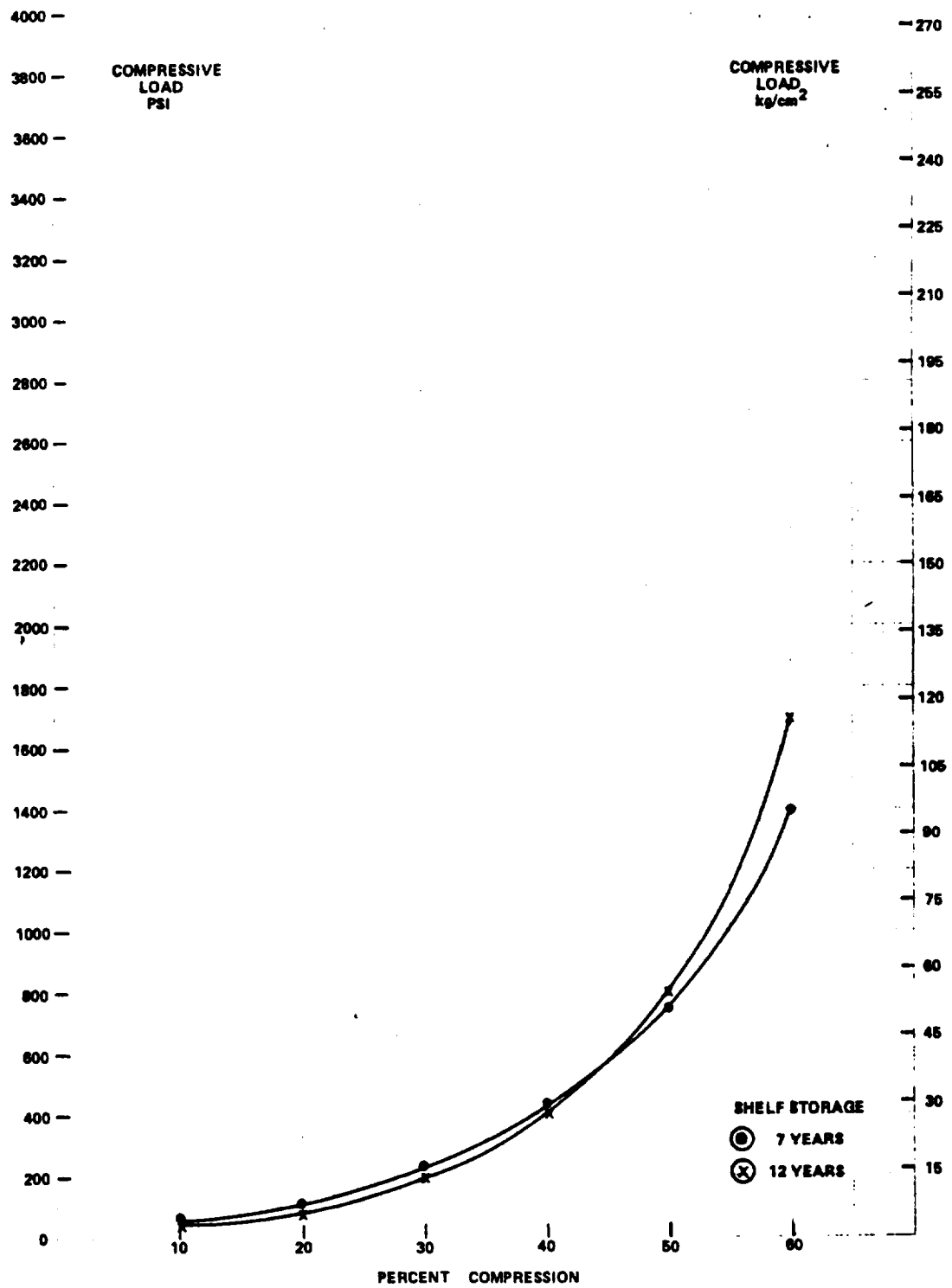


Figure 2. Buna-N N-304-7.

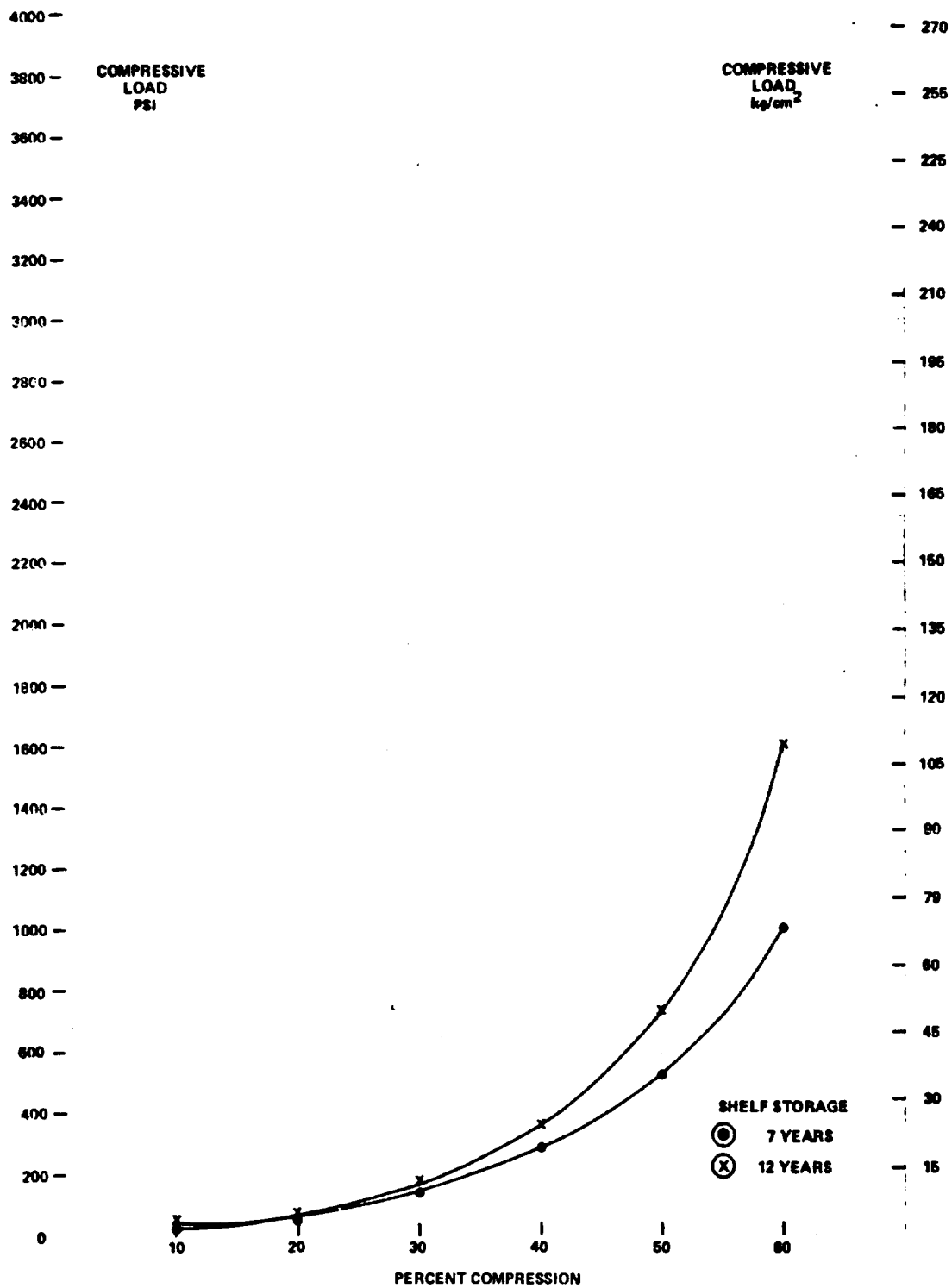


Figure 3. Buna-N 1011-10.

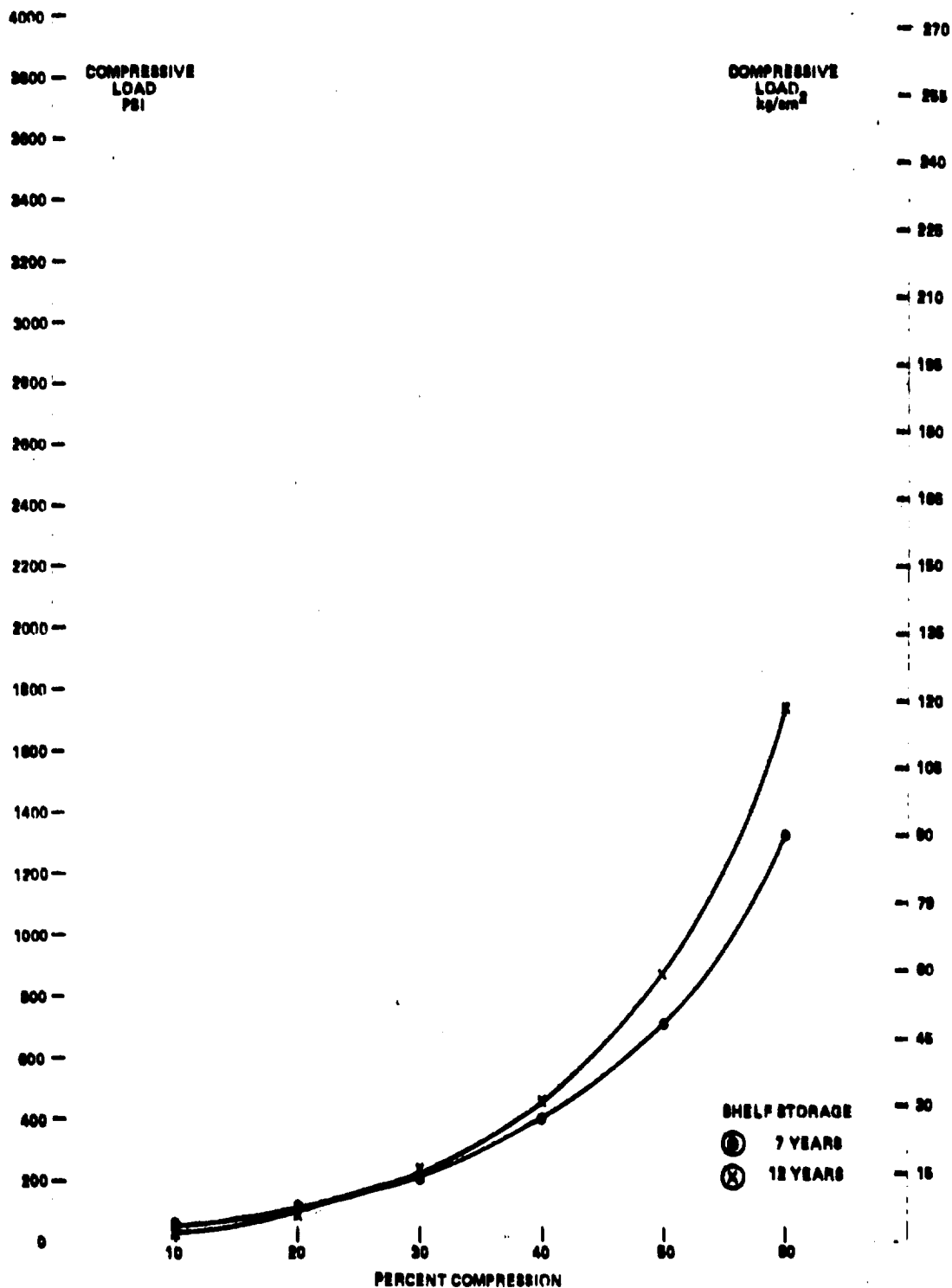


Figure 5. Buna-N 109-7.

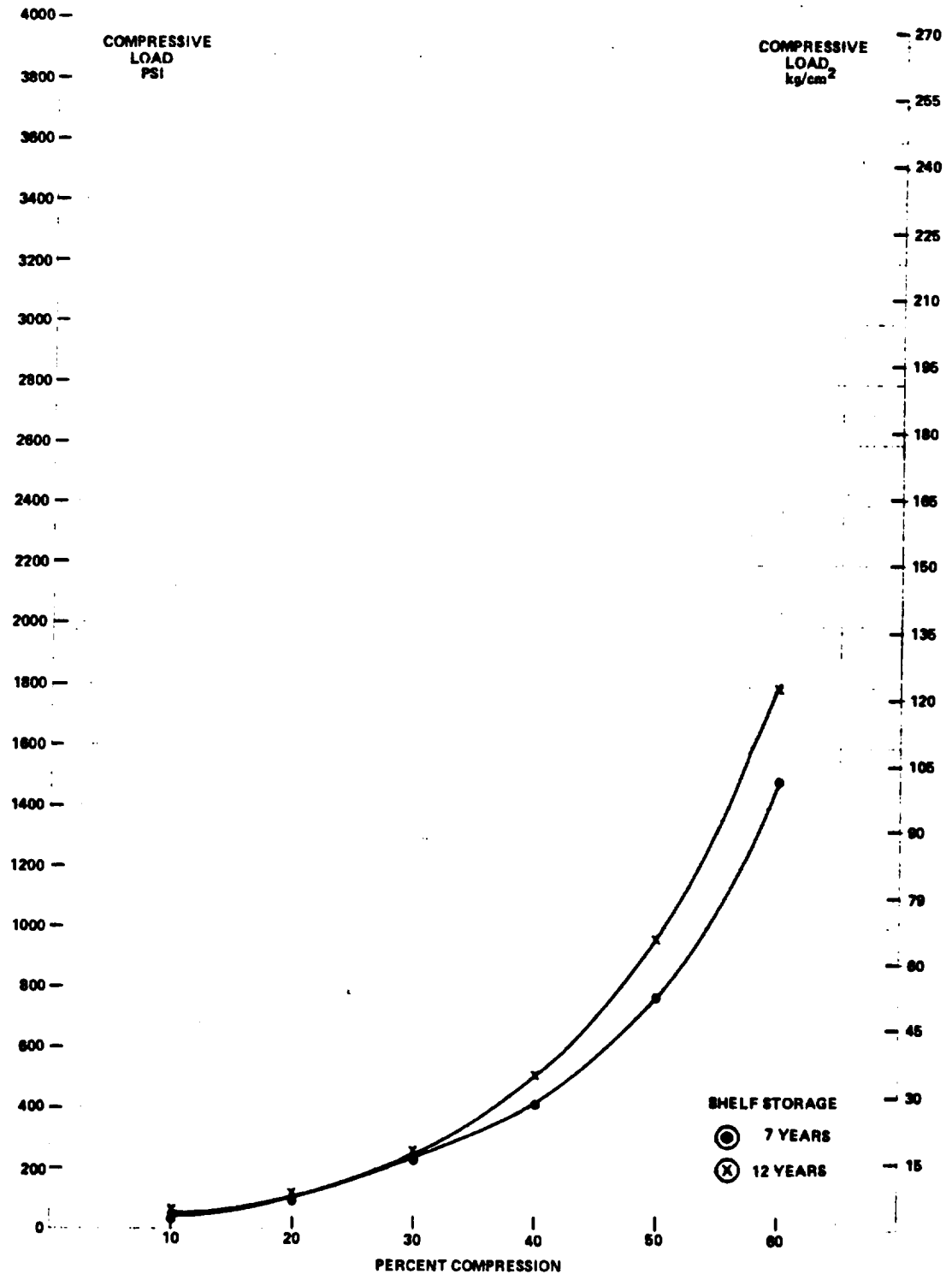


Figure 6. Butyl B-278-7.

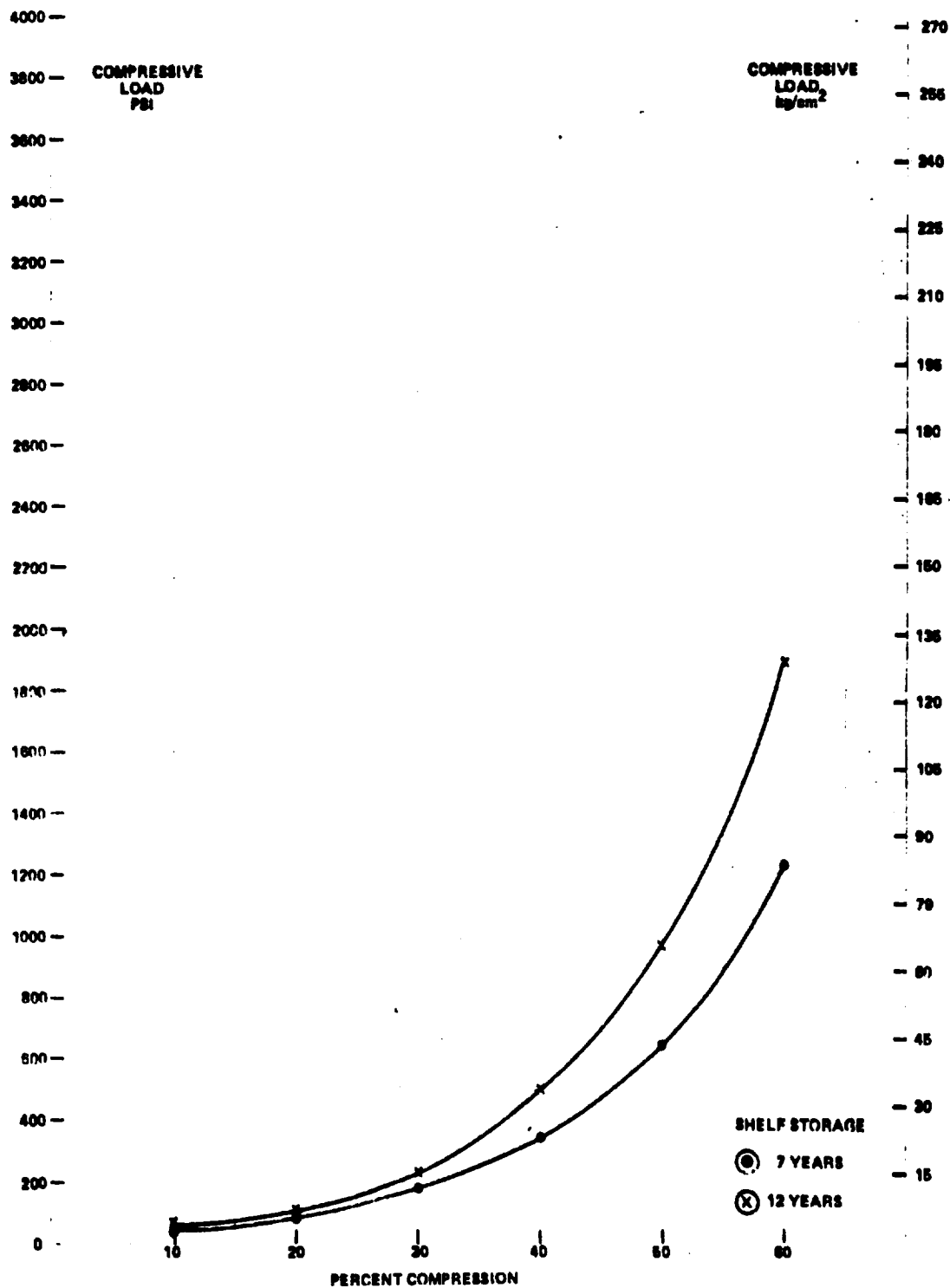


Figure 7. Butyl B-318-7.

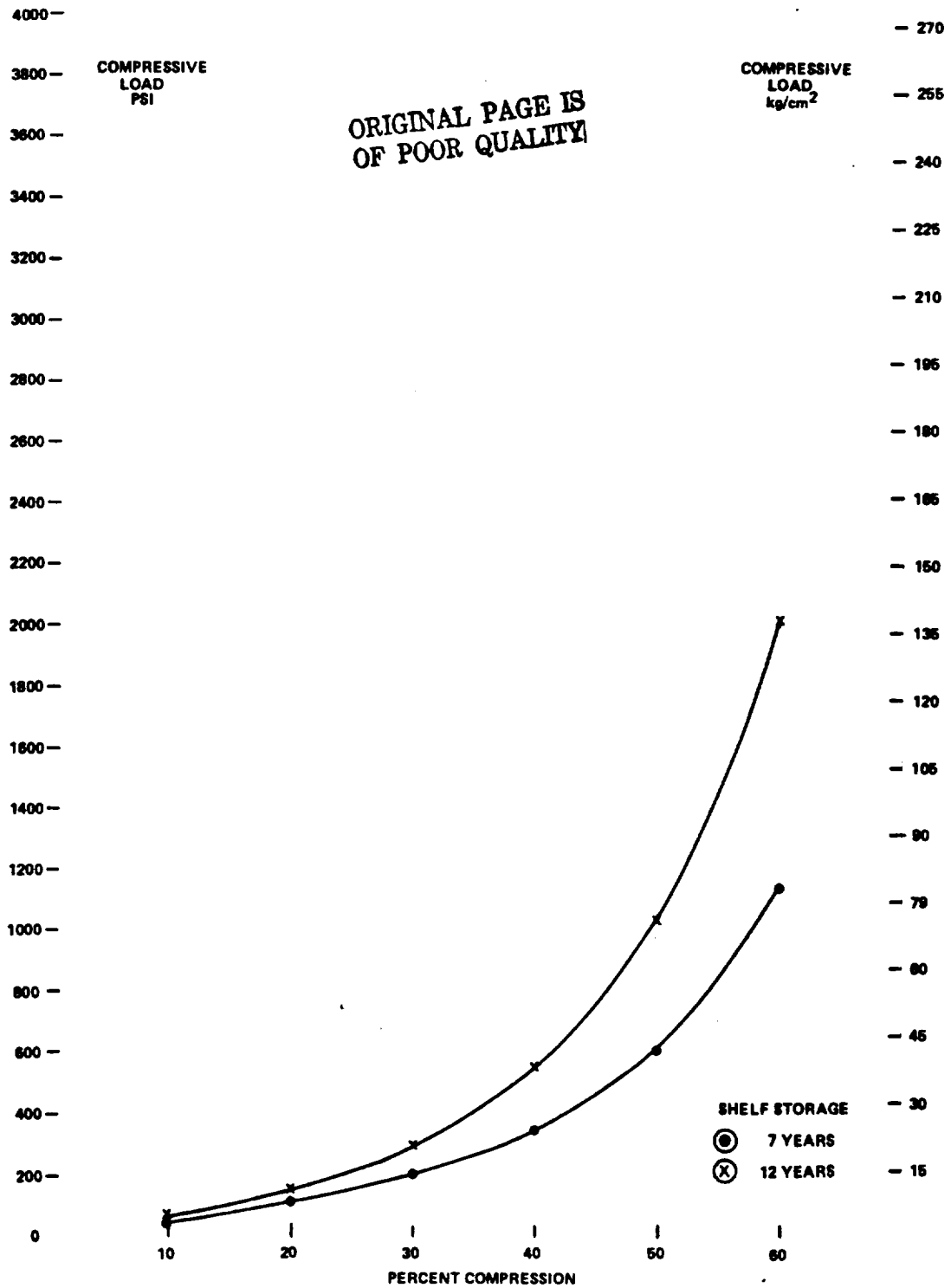


Figure 8. Neoprene C-147-7.

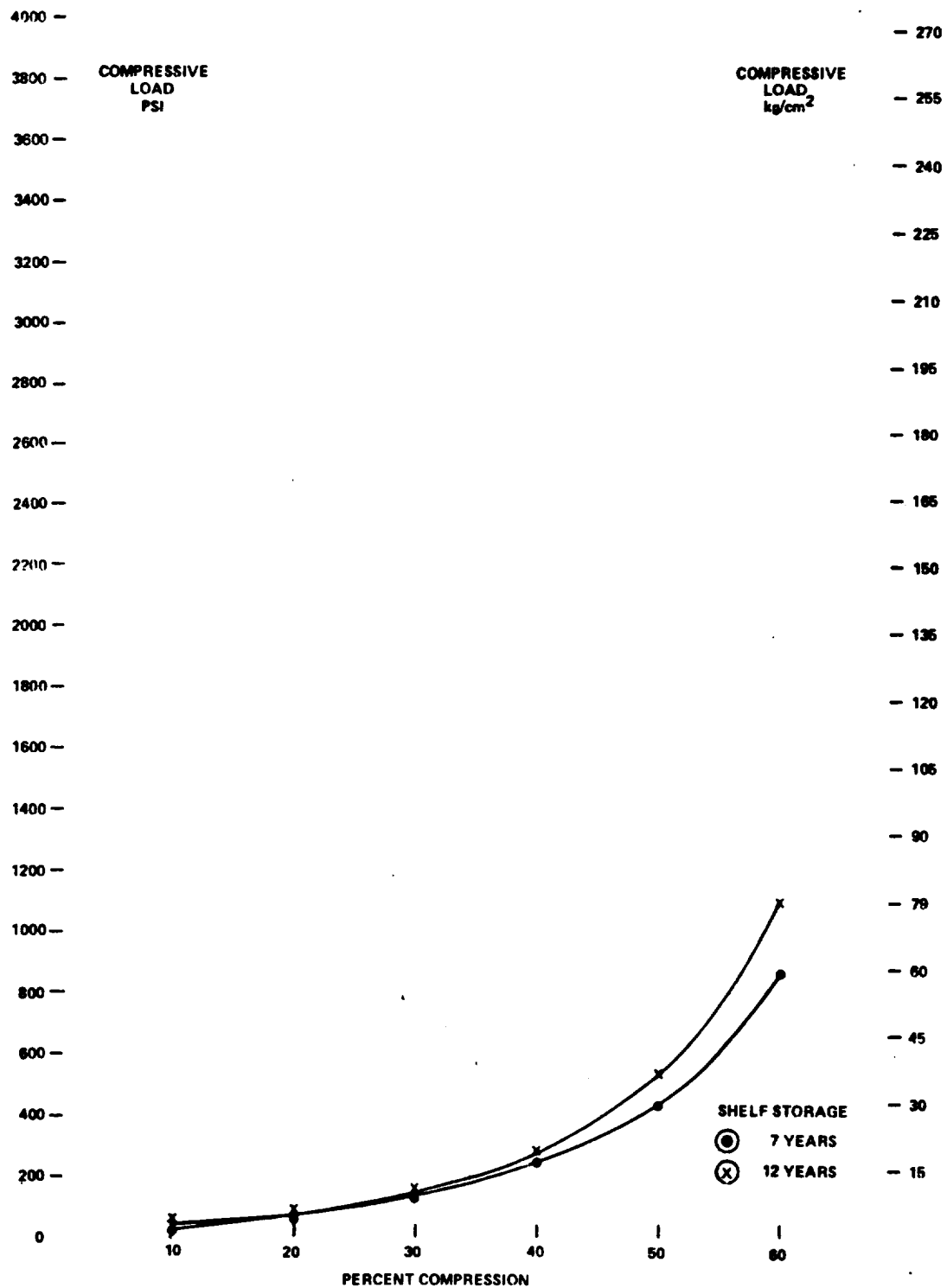


Figure 9. Silicone S-417-7.

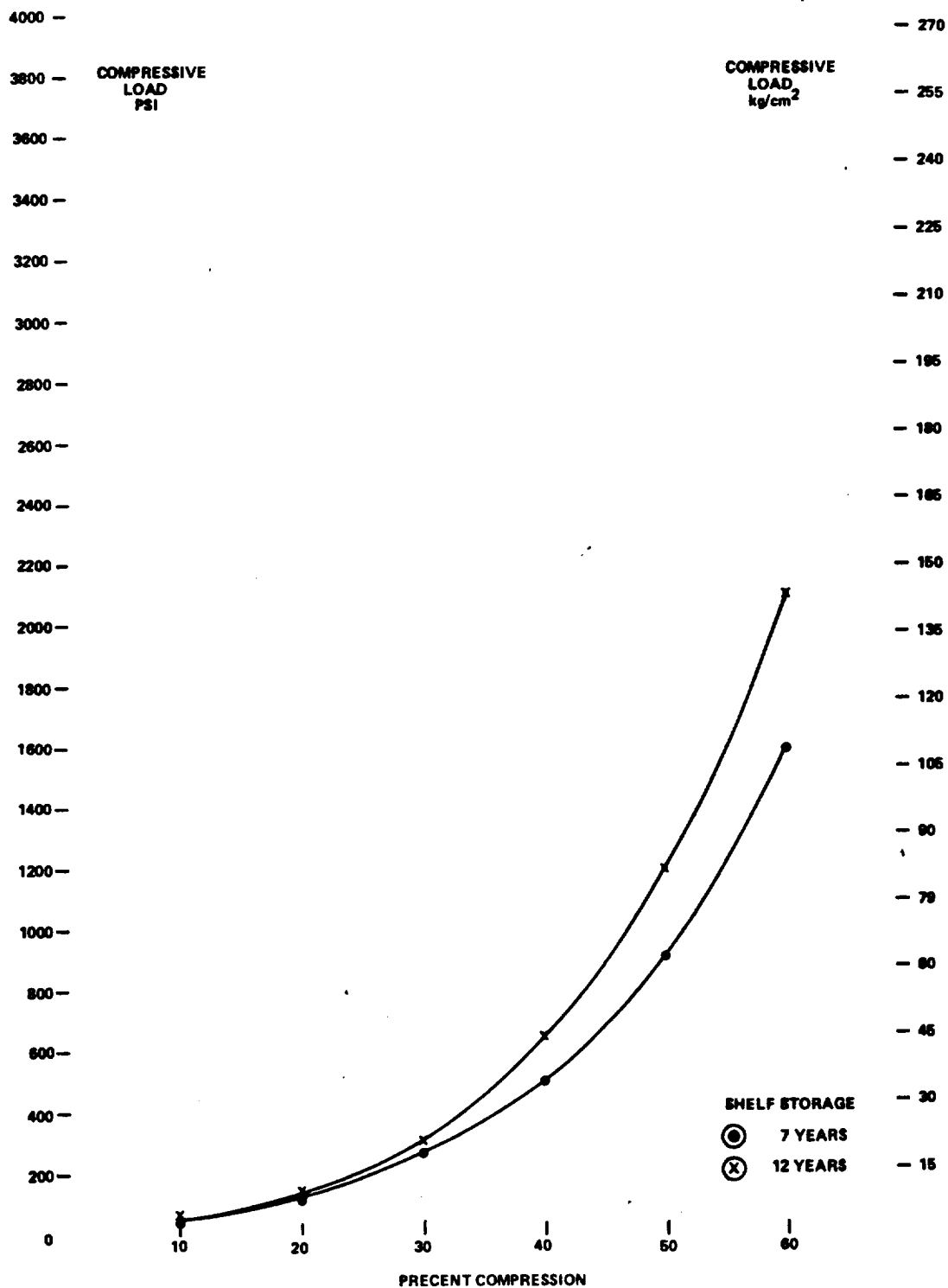


Figure 10. Silicone S-451-7.

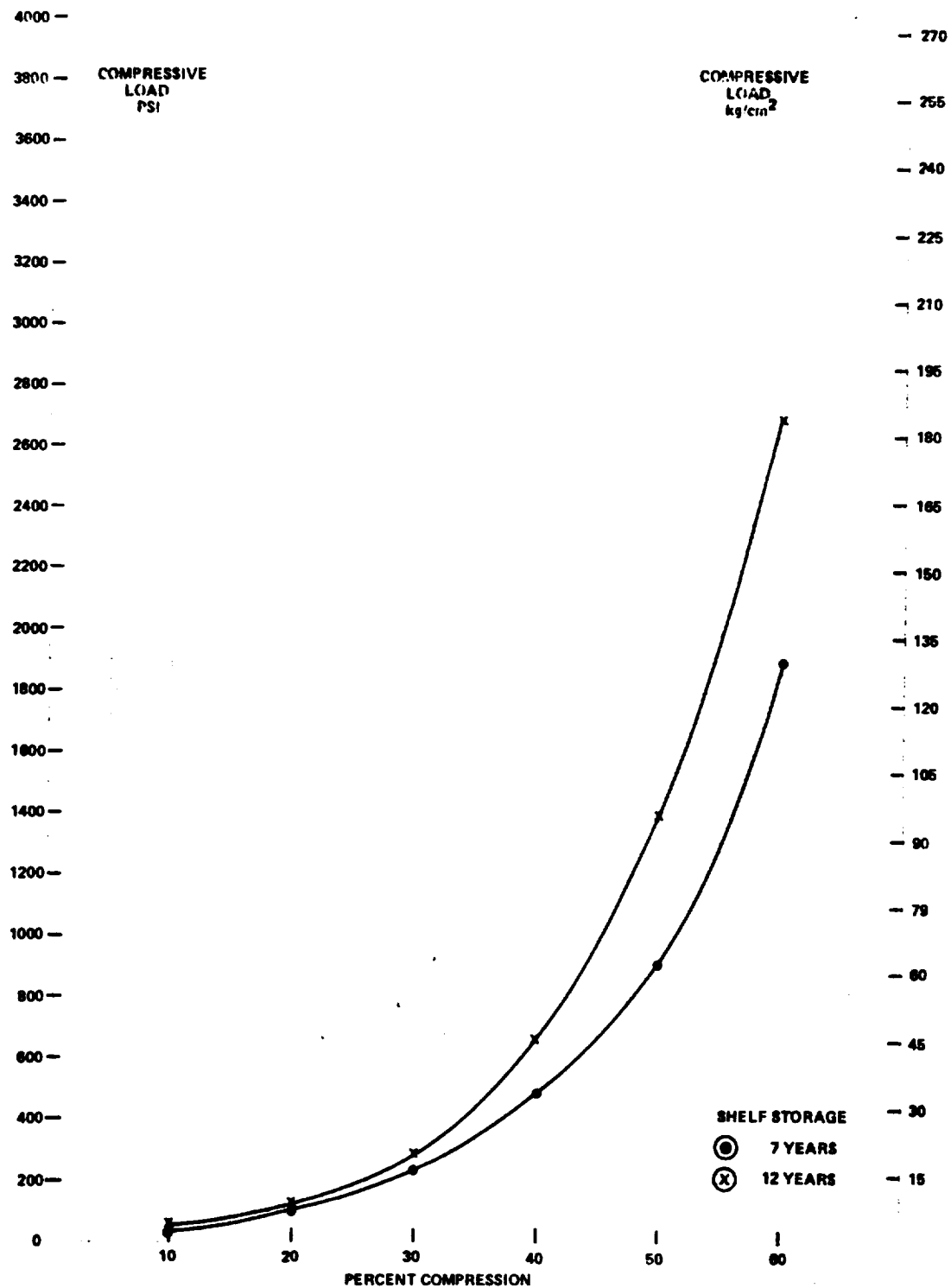


Figure 11. Viton 77-545.

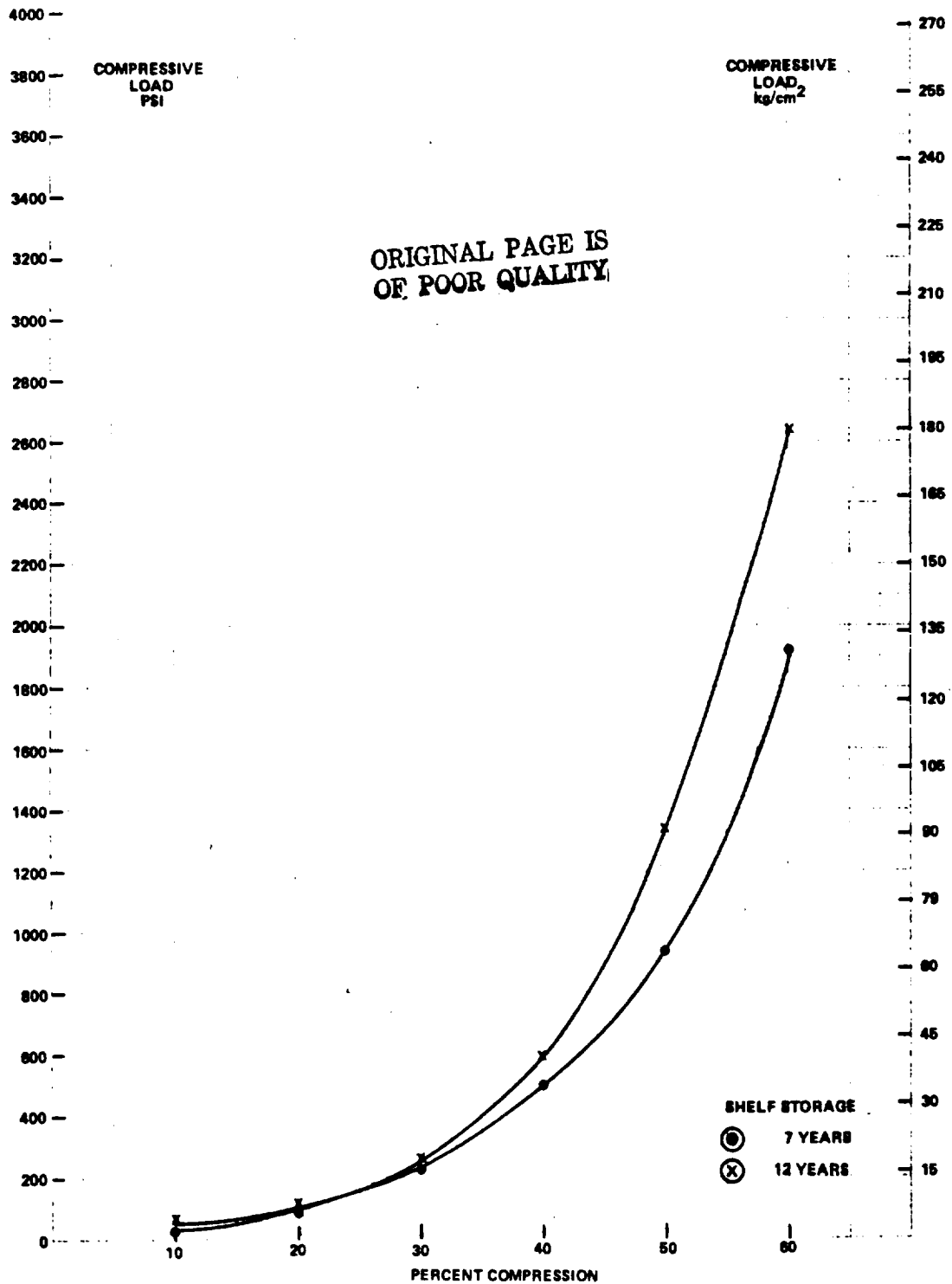


Figure 12. Viton V-495-7.

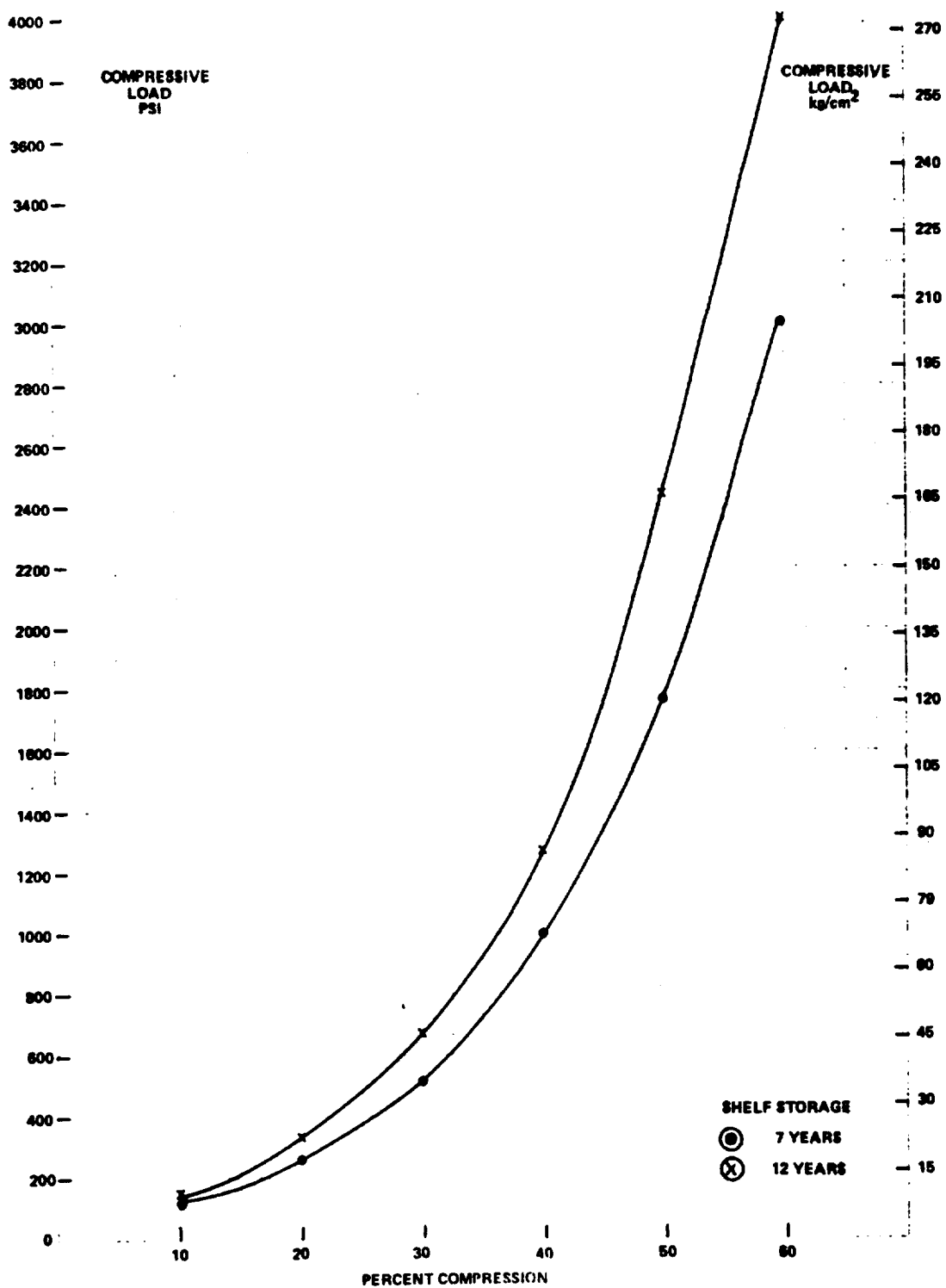


Figure 13. Viton V-274-9.

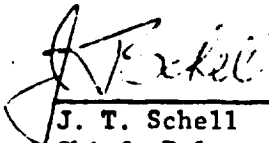
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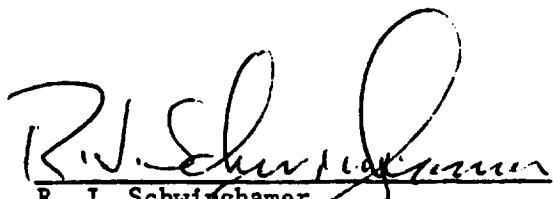
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